



city of  
**greenville**

# News Release

## **CITY MANAGER PRESENTS PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET FOR FY 2014-2015**

**(GREENVILLE SC)** Greenville City Manager John Castile presented the City's proposed FY 2014-2015 operating budget to City Council at the first of two work sessions this afternoon. The proposed budget for all funds is \$156,237,652, including a General Fund budget of \$74,609,477. This represents an overall budgetary increase of 13% and a General Fund increase of 10.2% from the adopted FY 2013-2014 operating budget. The proposed budget includes a recommended millage rate of 89.4, which is an increase of 4 mills over the current rate of 85.4. The proposed budget includes the programmed rate adjustment for the wastewater fee and a 1.6% rate adjustment for the stormwater fee. The proposed budget also includes a slight increase for building-related permit and plan review fees due to increased permit activity.

According to Castile, the proposed FY 2014-2015 operating budget reflects the ongoing objectives outlined in last year's budget: reinvest in the City's infrastructure and equipment to protect its assets and avoid higher costs in the future, make targeted investments to provide Greenville with an even brighter future and invest in people to help ensure the organization has a quality workforce. The budget also includes a new objective: reserve financial capacity for signature projects such as the relocation of the City's public works facility and a new regional park on the city's west-side, so that once the City has the required data and analysis, it has a path forward for their execution.

According to Castile, the City is now experiencing unprecedented growth and additional resources are needed to meet the increased demand for City services. While this is a positive development from the past several years, it challenges the City to continue the effort to address deferred capital, the increasing cost of service delivery and the accumulated impact of increasing service and workload requirements on the City's existing workforce. The significant increase in construction permit activity, the addition of two large public spaces that require maintenance, the construction of two new parking facilities and increased transit ridership all contribute to the need for additional resources, including employees. The proposed budget includes a net increase of staff to pre-

recession levels. This does not include the eight additional Central Business District officers who were added as a mid-year adjustment during the current fiscal year.

Property taxes comprise 44% of all General Fund revenues and represent the City's largest revenue source. The estimate for FY 2014-2015 is \$31,516,941, which is an 8.1% increase from the FY 2013-2014 property tax estimate of \$29,145,520 and reflects growth in assessed value (3.5%) as well as the proposed 4 mill increase. Licenses and permits represent the second largest revenue source for the City, comprising 42% of all General Fund revenues. The projection of \$30,077,705 is an increase of 7.0% over actual business license receipts in FY 2013-2014 and includes a 10% increase for building-related permit and plan review fees, which were last increased in 2007 (building permit) and 2011 (mechanical/HVAC, electrical and plumbing permits).

Castile shared that public safety remains the City's top priority, and that City Council long ago identified the need to add a new fire station to support the residential and commercial growth in the Verdae/Woodruff Road area. "The need for the Verdae/Woodruff fire station is well documented and has appeared in every City budget since at least FY 2007-2008," said Castile. "The additional revenue will be used to support the construction of the station, the staffing of 12 firefighters and the purchase of fire apparatus, and to begin reinvesting in the City's fire stations." The CUICAR, Verdae and Woodruff Road corridors, principally served by the Laurens Road and Pelham Road fire stations, have emergency response times that are well outside of the national standard of four minutes or less 90% of the time. The response times for the Augusta Street and Stone Avenue stations are also negatively impacted by the absence of a station on the eastside. As a result, the proposed budget includes over \$3.3 million for new Fire Department initiatives, including the new fire station and much-needed improvements to the existing fire stations.

The proposed budget includes \$2,739,759 in capital equipment purchases, including \$1,150,092 for Police Department vehicles and equipment and \$950,000 for a "Quint" for the Fire Department. The General Fund budget also includes \$2,219,450 for Capital Improvement Program (CIP) projects, including \$970,000 for street and sidewalk improvements and \$100,000 each for Village of West Greenville improvements, neighborhood park improvements and commercial corridor improvements. Additional funding for CIP projects from other funds includes \$1,225,000 for City Park Phase I, \$1,000,000 for trail expansion, \$250,000 for the public safety camera system, \$250,000 for Basin 16 rehabilitation, \$150,000 for Haywood Road sewer upgrades and \$100,000 for a wastewater system survey and modeling.

City Council's second budget workshop is scheduled for May 12 and a public hearing on the proposed budget is scheduled for May 19 at 5:30 p.m. in City Council chambers. Following the public hearing, City Council will hold first reading on the budget ordinance. Second reading for the CIP and the budget is scheduled for June 9.

Interested citizens can view the proposed budget online at [www.greenvillesc.gov](http://www.greenvillesc.gov) or view hard copies at City Hall in the Greenville Cares office on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor, the Office of Management & Budget on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor and the City Clerk's office on the 10<sup>th</sup> floor.

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